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ABSTRACT

It is suggested in this speech that in an effort to improve curriculum, administrators need to integrate and share research on values, industry input, strategy formulation and implementation, and historical and environmental perspectives. They need the realistic support and influence of various organizations within the university and beyond, departments within and beyond the college, regional and national professional organizations, the business community, and the major accreditation agency of concern.
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ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to improve curriculum, administrators need to integrate and share research on values, on industry input, on strategy formulation and implementation, and on historical and environmental perspectives. They need the realistic support and influence of various organizations within the university and beyond; departments within and beyond the college; professional organizations, regional and national; the business community, and the major accreditation agency of concern.

ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

For those of us who cannot ourselves invent sayings on a par with Mark Twain and Oscar Wilde, it's comforting to remember another comment of Emerson's: 'Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it.' It brings satisfaction to ourselves, delight to our listeners, enhancement to the subject, - and perhaps we can say - a tribute and a compliment to the originator of the line. As Alexander Smith said, 'To be occasionally quoted is the only fame I care for.'

A Treasury of Humorous Quotations, Herbert V. Prochnow, Jr., - 1969
Harper and Row, New York --

This introductory quote attempts to prepare you for the fact that much of what I share with you today is gleaned from others, others who have helped to inspire the purpose of my presentation:
"Administrative Efforts To Support Curriculum Development."

The focus of concern is primarily MBA Curricula. My interest was sparked in 1974 when I was confronted with the challenge of helping students improve their writing through a course entitled "Business Letters and Reports." The purpose of my presentation is to integrate and share findings to further curriculum development. By doing so I am modelling an open systems approach to curriculum development.

"Administrative Efforts To Support Curriculum Development," a title needs definition of terms: "Administrative" means contributing to, "Efforts" refer to an active use of energy to produce the advancement of curriculum by continued activities to sustain and improve curriculum, and "To support" means to uphold and carry forward.

Of particular interest are those course offerings which form the base or enrich the base of learning in the application of writing to achieve organizational objectives. These courses need not necessarily be offered by The College of Business Administration.

VALUES

In or around 1975 - a lone researcher through probing the archives located at Bank of America's International Headquarters in San Francisco came to formulate these words: "It looks as if in the past, managerial views evolved mainly as a result of progress made in techniques of observation and computation while future changes will be more likely to come from a reassessment of values." (1975, p. 227)

His doctoral research entitled "The Evolution of Managerial Attitudes Toward Organizational Members and Environmental Responsibilities" is unpublished as of this time - but Alexander Ernst Bergman, Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley has made a significant observation.

Although his work is unpublished, it forms a part of that vast collection of research that administrators do well to study, integrate, and share - if they are preparing to influence curriculum development. Dr. Clarence Walton, Catholic University of America, President, urged in a speech delivered on April 28, 1976 to the Annual Meeting of American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business that "because values and institutions are seriously threatened by momentous upheavals, the 'language games' invented by scholars to describe the present and the future demand special attention."

Environmental Perspectives

That curricula must adapt to changes in environment was a topic of Mahmoud Shah's research when he noted that a critical change of recent times is the emergence of an increasing awareness of an economic, social, political and business interdependency on a global scale. "An Arab oil embargo, world-wide food shortages, population explosion, environmental pollution, and similar events - coupled with advances in communication and transportation have made the world's nations closer neighbors." (1975, p. 26) The effects of curriculum are so pervasive that many studies have been directed toward evaluating this critical component of the educational system. The American

Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business define the purpose of the curriculum: "to provide for a broad education, preparing the student for imaginative and responsible citizenship in business and society - domestic and world-wide."

Historical Perspectives

"The early start toward broad education envisaged in the gift of Wharton, Stanford and others, was soon swamped by the practical necessities of providing people for a growing nation. Business schools, regardless of their origin, moved into the practical curriculum. Between the early 1900's and the late 1950's, collegiate education for business was mostly preoccupied with phenomenal growth. In the five years 1959-1964, collegiate education for business underwent a concentrated period of self-examination and self-criticism." (Cheit, 1975, p. 13)

The Pierson's Report, published in 1959, noted "the central problem that academic standards need to be increased." Furthermore it noted, careers in business are extremely varied; as an area of academic training, the field is new; the subject lacks a well-defined base, as well as a well-knit internal structure. Also many important aspects of business life have a remote connection with academic work. Heavy enrollments since World War I compounded these problems. Pierson concluded, "We need to develop transferrable capacities which can be used in many situations and jobs: clear analysis, imaginative

reasoning, and balanced judgment." (1959, IX, XIII) To a marked degree the Pierson Study focuses on the question of the importance of a liberal education for business, on the ways by which this liberal education can best be achieved, on the appropriate degrees of specialization within the University - and on the qualitative aspects of work at all levels of all types.

Role of Curriculum

In 1975 Dr. George Leland Bach (Stanford University) noted a surprising consensus on the right kind of curricula to develop flexible general management, problem solvers. Students need pursue the following objectives:

- a) to develop underlying analytical concepts;
- b) to apply concepts in the fields; (finance, marketing, etc.)
- c) to integrate in an area often called business policy; and
- d) to stress the interaction between business and socio-political economic environment.

In a recent address to the MBA Admissions Symposium on November 30, 1977 in San Francisco, Dr. Bach emphasized once again that we must help students gain a firm grasp of underlying disciplines to apply flexibly to new kinds of situations, to an uncertain world of the 1980's and beyond.

COMMUNICATION AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Need For Modification of Curricula

General skills such as communication, critical thinking, and interpersonal competencies were his recommendations for curricular changes - after Dr. Lewis Solomon's research summarized in his article, "The Roles of Schools of Business in Career Development and Success," published through The Higher Education Research Institute, Graduate School of UCLA.

Communication Defined

According to Redding (1972) communication in organizations is a process which people work with and through others, to mutually accomplish the organization's objectives. Greenbaum and White developed an approach furnishing a methodology by which we can examine, analyze, evaluate and suggest changes in communication structures and activities of an organization. This approach delineates the following networks:

1. Regulative: policy statements procedures, rules, superior-subordinate interaction;
2. Innovative: problem solving meetings, suggestion systems, oral and written proposals for change;
3. Integrative: praise, rewards, promotions, informal get-togethers;
4. Informative-instructive: company publications, bulletin boards, training activities, grapevine.

(Greenbaum and White, 1976, p. 6)

Strategy Implementation

The importance of all facets of the theory and application of communication becomes apparent as we look at a "Social System Theory of Corporate Strategy" published in 1976. (Guth, Ansoff, et. al.) The importance of words, of writing, of definitions and identification is clear. These authors all agree on the basic intellectual tasks that strategy formulation and implementation involves, that is:

1. The assessment of environmental conditions and trends and the identification of opportunities and threats;
2. The determination of comparative strengths and weaknesses of the organization for competing in particular product-market areas;
3. The identification of the objectives, goals, and values to be served by the organization; and
4. The identification of the requirements of a chosen strategy for particular management systems - to implement that strategy effectively and efficiently.

Change and Role of Collegiate Leadership

When we attempt to develop a strategy for changes in curriculum - or in other areas, we often overlook the notion that any particular planned change effort is deeply conditioned by the state of the system in which it takes place. This state includes the properties of the organization, its communication adequacy, and the distribution of influence. Once again we see the importance of communication. The properties noted above have a powerful effect on the speed and durability of any particular innovation.

The importance of the written word can be highlighted in reviewing the cognitive responsibilities of managers: problem-solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution. March and Simon (1958) developed several approaches to problem-solving and decision-making: that wherein parties assume common objectives (problem-solving approach), that wherein parties share some beliefs at some level, recognizing that goals may be different (persuasion), that wherein parties accept the fact that they have a basic disagreement over fixed goals, (bargaining) and that wherein parties accept goals as fixed but the arena is not fixed (political approach).

On this last approach a pertinent finding was made by Richard J. Johnson and presented in The Academy of Management, Autumn 1977, Policy and Planning Division Newsletter: Formal planning systems may be the initial change agent in the strategy implementation process and the formal structure may specify the constraints within which change and implementation occur. However, the use of power and the organization's political system are the engines that drive the implementation process on a day to day basis - this according to a recently completed three year study of Japanese and American management practices by the author.

ORGANIZATIONS

According to AACSB President, W. C. Flewellen, the objective of accreditation is to encourage and maintain a favorable educational environment in schools where the primary objective is the education for business administration. (1976 p. 31)

American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)

AACSB provides 5 areas of study to be included in the MBA program.

The Common Body of Knowledge (CBK) includes:

- 1) the study of the functions of an enterprise;
- 2) an understanding of environmental influences, including economic, legal sociological, and political effects;
- 3) an understanding of the concepts and the ability to apply the quantitative tools of management;
- 4) the study of organizational theory, interpersonal behavior, and individual and group dynamics;
- 5) the study of administrative processes with emphasis on integrating analysis and policy determination.

Areas stressed have been consistently fundamental with little dramatic changes. What is needed beyond the broad statement of objectives - are operational objectives, performance objectives, so that courses and programs can be realistically appraised. The most notable change has been within the past five (5) years: AACSB opened membership to all business administration schools whether accredited or not, with the accredited schools forming a council.

Subsequently, the scope of AACSB and its promotion of broad based liberal education is widened. Furthermore AACSB has become international with member schools from Canada, Europe, and elsewhere abroad.

Paraphrase of conference with
Dr. William J. Regan
McLaren College of Business Administration
University of San Francisco, 1976

The Business Community

In a study of the Fortune 500, entitled: The MBA - Profile of What Business Wants: Costellano, De Lozier, and Ponder Embose sought to determine where business can be placed in the generalist/specialist spectrum, to determine the image and profile business seeks in the MBA holder, to determine courses business feels are most important on an MBA curricula; and to determine if significant differences in the attitudes of business can be detected in industry groups. (1975)

Evidence from the response of 26.6% or 113 of the companies involved indicate that many firms had the following position:

- 1) they want the MBA to specialize in a functional area such as finance, marketing, accounting;
- 2) they want the MBA to obtain broad administrative skills in that area of specialization;
- 3) they view the MBA as an individual with long-range executive potential;
- 4) and they see work experience as a valuable supplement to the MBA degree.

In a May, 1977 workshop sponsored by the Eastern Academy of Management in Hartford, Connecticut, three chief executive officers spoke on "The Role of the CEO in the 1980's." H. R. Roberts of Connecticut General Insurance, W. J. Connolly of Connecticut Bank and Trust, and G. M. Ford of Emhart Industries were in general agreement:

The CEO will have to be more concerned with the view that if private enterprise can't satisfy publics, then government will. The CEO will need to be more politically active outside the firm, be able to think strategically, be sensitive to people's needs, and have intellectual breadth.

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, through Senior Editor Harriet Prentiss in October, 1977 conducted a six (6) page survey to help better understand the needs and preferences of those who teach the undergraduate course in business communication. By responding, here is yet another way for us to cooperate with business in an effort to improve materials for programs in business communication.

Collegiate Institutions

In their January 22, 1975 statement published in the Graduate Catalog, the University of Santa Clara refers to curriculum in its statement of purpose issued by the Board of Trustees: Offering an integrated curriculum designed not only to provide the scientific and humanistic knowledge necessary to enable students to develop fully as persons, but also to demonstrate the unity of all forms of knowledge and to enable students to assume roles of leadership in the modern world. (1975, p. 10)

Marquette University's MBA catalog notes the importance of a "Total System Point of View." Business decisions are not as a rule, produced by single minds but tend to be the product of a number of

minds, and usually must be executed by other persons in the organization. Such a total systems point of view consists in a realistic way of seeing all of the parts and the whole of a business firm.
(1976, p. 1)

I have studied the catalogs of the 28 Jesuit Universities throughout the United States to research what course offerings forward the students' understanding and application of communication theory. My major conclusion is that there is much work ahead for us in building an awareness of the responsibility to provide courses of benefit to the communications needs of our students as future managers for the 2,000's. The Association of Jesuit Schools and Colleges has been a positive influence in stimulating the exchange of ideas for various professional organizations implementation.

Various Professional Organizations

During this month both the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Modern Language Association (MLA) - the first being held in New York, and latter here in Chicago - each is including a session on technical writing. The Organizational Communication Division Newsletter, issued in November, 1977 by the Academy of Management (AMA) gave recognition to all of the AMA members of that division featured on the ABCA program for this meeting you and I are attending. This inter-organizational cooperation is healthy and increasingly needed if we are to strengthen the role that each of us plays in improving curricula.

Within the University, inter-departmental exchange is to be encouraged. The Communication Arts Department, the English Department, the Computer Science Department - can help us to develop an awareness of the need for improved writing - and can help to respond to the need through joint planning and implementation. Within the college administrative process, the administrator can daily support the curricula by maintaining standards of excellence in his/her spoken and written communication with students - and faculty.

At Canisius College in Buffalo, New York, Dean Bernard Martin requests that poorly written letters from students be re-written and provides the student with access to tutorial assistance from graduate students.

After receiving Dr. Myron Glassman's (Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia) 1977 national survey results on business communication needs, I forwarded the study to our Communication Arts Department Chairman, Dr. Richard Davis. Next Fall 1978 his department is introducing a new course on "Oral Communications in Business." I believe Dr. Glassman's research helped make that possible. I also forwarded a copy to our English Department Chairman.

After failing in my attempt to get feedback from our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on a proposal regarding business communication - I diverted my attention to the English Department. Dr. Hugh Dawson, Chairman, requested that two English Department

representatives meet with C.O.B.A.'s Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain input for improving the Writing I and Writing II Course offerings required of all business administration majors. I followed up the meeting by requesting each committee member to submit in writing responses to a few questions about the writing performance of our students.

One of the impressive outcomes of the joint meeting was an increased awareness that all faculty, not just the faculty who teach writing, have a responsibility to support and improve the communication performance of students through class and class assignments.

A more concrete outcome of this meeting was the increase in the number of Writing II sections offered for Spring '78. Thus the students can meet their writing requirement fairly early in their academic program - instead of delaying until the senior year - or even attempting to waive the requirement in their final semester. In our pre-registration letter to our undergraduate students, we cooperated with the English Department by making a special note to advise students that additional sections of Writing II had been scheduled for their benefit.

USF's Evening College continues to offer "Business Letters and Reports: which we allow the students - if requested - to substitute for the Writing II requirement. We prefer that this course be taken as an elective - beyond Writing I and Writing II. We feel that given

the general writing performance of students entering college - at least two required courses are a must.

In summary, we are attempting to strengthen our inter-departmental planning, especially since at USF the business administration program is a four year one - and the student does not wait until the junior and senior year for his/her business courses.

In early April, 1977, Dr. William Sukel administered the College English Placement Test to approximately 250 USF students enrolled in the course, "Elements and Dynamics of Business." Scores ranged from 48 to 95 in one group with 106 being the total possible score. This test was authored by Oscar M. Hough, Professor of Education, University of Kansas, and James I. Brown, Professor of Rhetoric, University of Minnesota. The test was published in 1969 by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts. Our college administration continues to support such attempts to help diagnose an aspect of the communication need of students.

In summary, we have researched, integrated and attempted to share aspects of values, communication, and organizations - to encourage administrative efforts to support curriculum development. An open systems approach advocated so as to profit by domestic and international input from other collegiate institutions, the business community, professional organizations, accrediting agencies both regional and national.

Referring back to our introductory quote for a touch of humor, let me remind you that Alexander Smith said that "to be occasionally quoted is the only fame I care for."

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